

Dear Ms. Butler:

Thank you for your remarks before the Mississippi River Commission during our public meeting held on August 17, 2001, in St. Louis, Missouri.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers strives to be responsive to the public; however, many of the issues you have addressed are outside of the Corps' control or jurisdiction. The Corps, through its environmental impact statement and planning process, engages the public to determine the issues and concerns and accepts input on proposed plans as a component of the total planning process. However, the Corps also receives coordinated input from cost-sharing local sponsors on each project. The cost-sharing local sponsor is charged with representation of the best interest of the local constituents. The Corps is not in a position to mediate between individual citizen groups and elected officials. Thus, the cost-sharing local sponsor is to determine such issues as the source of cost-share funding, location of project focus areas, and ultimately the actual project the cost-sharing local sponsor is willing to carry forward in the development process.

In regard to the Wedgewood Federal Emergency Management Agency buy-out area, it was the East St. Louis Community Action Network (ESL CAN) that brought this area to the attention of the St. Louis District for consideration in its ongoing East St. Louis Ecosystem Restoration and Flood Damage Reduction project. A review of the public involvement records indicates that members of the ESL CAN have attended all public meetings

on this project and have organized several special presentations to groups regarding the Wedgewood buy-out area. As a result, the St. Louis District has been under the impression that ESL CAN was a conduit for providing information to the larger number of individual public involvement groups such as the Dayton/Wedgewood Neighborhood Organization.

With respect to your comments regarding notification of the public interests, the St. Louis District has a web page where all projects are posted. The site is used to post studies and permits that are available for review and comment. For your future reference, this site can be accessed through www.mvs.usace.army.mil.

The Corps will continue its efforts to meet the flood control, navigation, and environmental needs in the Mississippi Valley. Our success is largely attributable to a strong partnership with local interests and groups such as yours. As you may be aware, the Dayton/Wedgewood Neighborhood Organization has been informed that another full public meeting session will be scheduled upon completion of the planning report that addresses the Wedgewood alternative. Public notices will be mailed once a date has been selected for the meeting.

Thank you again for your participation in our St. Louis hearing. The Commission appreciates receiving your comments and looks forward to hearing from you at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

Edwin J. Arnold, Jr.
Brigadier General, U. S. Army
President, Mississippi River
Commission